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ABSTRACT

The Occupational Proficiency Training Program (OPT) was initiated in Mitchell County High School, Georgia, to identify potential dropouts, place them in an alternative vocational education program, provide special communications and mathematics assistance, and maintain knowledge through recordkeeping of a student's progress through the program. Objectives of the OPT program were to decrease the dropout rate for these students, to increase achievement levels, and to reduce the retention of OPT students within grade levels in high school. The program was evaluated for four components: (1) a pretest-posttest analysis of student scores; (2) an examination of OPT students over time to identify patterns in academic performance, attendance rates, and dropout rates; (3) interviews to identify student and teacher attitudes toward the program; and (4) scores on the pretest used to develop a prediction equation for success in vocational education programs. The evaluation showed that, overall, the OPT program appeared to have consistently increased academic performance of the students in many areas and across grade levels. In addition, students in the OPT program increased their academic skills over the 3-year participation in the program. The study results also indicated that the program is effective in keeping OPT students in school longer than the comparable non-OPT group. Students were positive about the program, although they noted a negative attitude from non-OPT students. Most of the teachers interviewed described the overall worth of the program as excellent or good, although some thought it was too early to determine results. Overall, the OPT program was rated as successful for its ability to keep students in school where they can acquire employment skills. (KC)

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OCCUPATIONAL PROFICIENCY TRAINING PROGRAM

1982-83 FINAL REPORT

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Occupational Proficiency Training Program

1982-83 Final Report

Constance C. Bergquist, Ph.D.
Evaluation Systems Design, Inc.

May 18, 1983

Occupational Proficiency Training Program
1982-83 Final Report

In 1980, Mitchell County school officials and the high school's administrators initiated the Occupational Proficiency Training Program (OPT) in Mitchell County High School. This program was designed to identify potential drop-outs, place them in an alternative vocational education program, provide special communications and mathematics assistance, and maintain knowledge through recordkeeping of a student's progress through the program. Outcome objectives of the OPT program were to decrease the drop-out rate for these students, increase achievement levels, and reduce the retention of OPT students within grade levels in high school so that they could continue learning and social experiences with their age mates. Evaluation Systems Design, Inc. (ESDI) of Tallahassee, Florida has conducted an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. In this report are presented the results of the pretest and posttest data collection for the third year of development, 1982-83, and cumulative changes for the last two years of implementation.

Program activities for the third year concentrated on curriculum development and implementation. Previous evaluation reports provided by ESDI include the survey reports, "Report of Findings - Surveys" and "Business Survey," February, 1981; the "Analysis of California Achievement Test Pretest Scores," April, 1981; the "1980-81 Final Report;" and the "Report of the Fall Analysis, 1981-82;" and the "1981-82 Final Report."

There are four components of the evaluation presented in this report. First, a comprehensive pretest-posttest analysis of student scores for the 1982-83 school year is presented including comparisons with results from

previous data analyses. The second component of the analyses examines OPT students over time to identify patterns in academic performance, attendance rates, and drop-out rates. In the third component, attitudes of the students and teachers toward the program are presented as identified through interviews. Procedures for each component are described first and followed by narrative, tabular, and/or graphic presentations of the results. In the fourth component, scores on the pretest were used to develop a prediction equation for success in vocational education programs.

Pretest-Posttest Analysis of Student Scores

The mathematics and reading sections of the California Achievement Tests (CAT) were utilized for a three year period to track the academic progress of OPT students. Because of shifts in the school population (merging of Mitchell and Baker County secondary student populations and opening of the new high school in the Fall, 1981) and the developmental nature of the program during the first year of operation (1980-81), results presented in this portion of the report represent only the 1981-82 and 1982-83 school years.

Interpretability of Measures

The California Achievement Tests is published by CTB/McGraw-Hill, with the most recent edition produced in 1977. This broad spectrum achievement battery includes grade level norms stated in percentiles and a comprehensive score scale permitting analyses across grades and forms of the test. The scale scores are expressed in three-digit numbers ranging from 000 to 999. There are a total of 125 items on the two mathematics subtests of the CAT and 100 on the two reading subtests. Table 1 presents the number of test items for each of the subtests in the mathematics and reading sections of the CAT.

Table 1

Number of Items per Subtest on the California Achievement Test

Subtest		Number of Items
Mathematics		
	Computation	60
	Concepts and Applications	65
	Total	125
Reading		
	Vocabulary	30
	Comprehension	70
	Total	100

Testing was conducted in October and April of the 1982-83 school year for grades 8-12 using Form C in the fall and Form D in the spring. The evaluators observed the test administration to ensure adherence to the standardized administration procedures.

Student Populations

There were five separate populations of interest in the evaluation of the OPT program:

OPT students - students who had been in the OPT program for 1-3 years. First year students entered in the fall, 1982; second year students entered in the fall, 1981; third year students entered in the fall, 1980, the first developmental year for the program.

Non-OPT students - students who, in the eighth grade, appeared likely to meet the qualifications for entry into the program the following year. These students then became the OPT students in successive years of the study.

Vocational Education Students - students who were in vocational education programs, but were not OPT students (primarily grades 10-12 with very few ninth grade students).

Special Education Students - students placed into an exceptional student program (very few students in grades 9-11 and no identified students in grade 12).

Regular Education Students - all other students in grades 9-12 in the school.

Different levels of the CAT were administered according to grade level as follows:

Grade 8 - Level 17

Grade 9 - Level 18

Grades 10-12 - Level 19

Display and interpretation of scale scores from these three levels permit analyses and comparisons across levels of the test for progressive grades in the program. Table 2 presents demographic information on the sex, race, and median ages of the student populations included in the final data analysis for the 1982-83 school year. Ninth and tenth grade OPT student populations are composed of approximately 50% male and 90% black students, and are approximately one year older than other students in the same grade. The eleventh grade OPT population is approximately two-thirds male and 100% black.

Collection and Analysis Procedures

All demographic information and answers were recorded onto optical scan answer sheets that were scored at the FSU Computing Center. Resulting raw scores were transformed into percentiles for reporting to students and standard scores for use in the evaluation data analyses. A matched data set was created consisting of pretest and posttest scores on each subtest and total scores by section. Thus, the final analyses were conducted only on standard scores for students who took both mathematics subtests during the pretest and posttest or both reading subtests during the pretest and postest. Table 3 presents the number of students for each population of interest by grade level. All analyses were performed using the SPSS statistical analyses computer program packages.

Table 2

Demographic Information on Students

FACTORS	OPT	NON-OPT (8th grade)	VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	REGULAR EDUCATION	SPECIAL EDUCATION
Ninth					
Sex					
Male	50%	58%	50%	39%	50%
Female	50%	42%	50%	61%	50%
Race					
White	6%	27%	75%	35%	20%
Black	94%	72%	25%	64%	80%
Median Age	16	15	15	15	16
Tenth					
Sex					
Male	53%		100%	44%	60%
Female	47%		0	56%	40%
Race					
White	13%		63%	34%	0
Black	84%		38%	66%	100%
Median Age	17		16	16	17
Eleventh					
Sex					
Male	67%		73%	47%	83%
Female	33%		27%	69%	17%
Race					
White	0		33%	22%	33%
Black	100%		67%	77%	67%
Median Age	18		17	17	17
Twelfth					
Sex					
Male			67%	29%	
Female			33%	71%	
Race					
White			25%	23%	
Black			67%	76%	
Median Age			18	18	

Table 3

Number of Students by Program by Grade Level

Program	Test	Grade Level			
		Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh	Twelfth
OPT	Math	18	32	6	
	Reading	17	31	5	
Non-OPT (8th grade)	Math	80			
	Reading	81			
Vocational Education	Math	4	8	15	12
	Reading	3	8	15	15
Regular Education	Math	155	113	116	87
	Reading	157	116	113	88
Special Education	Math	10	5	6	
	Reading	11	5	6	

Results

Tables 4-7 present the means, standard deviations, and 95% confidence intervals for pretest and posttest results on the mathematics subtests for grades nine to twelve, respectively. In the ninth grade, for the total score and the two subtest scores, means for the OPT students were consistently higher than the special education students, similar to the Non-OPT students, and lower than the vocational education and regular education students. All 95% confidence intervals from fall to spring testings for each group for each portion of the mathematics section were overlapping, indicating no statistical differences from fall to spring in 1982-83. It should be noted that the numbers of students tested in the categories of vocational education and special education were extremely small, rendering interpretations of these data very difficult. This fact prevailed through all four grade levels.

In the tenth grade, means for the OPT students were similar to the special education students and lower than the vocational and regular education students. There was a similar pattern in the eleventh grade; however, means of the vocational education students in the eleventh grade were similar to regular education means. In the twelfth grade, means for the regular education students were higher than means for vocational edcuation students. Comparisons of pretest-to-posttest 95% confidence intervals for each group for each pair of test scores on all three grade levels were overlapping except for tenth grade regular education mathematics computation scores. There appeared to be a significant increase in scores on this subtest.

Tables 8-11 present the means, standard deviations, and 95% confidence intervals for reading scores on the pretest and posttest by group for grades nine to twelve, respectively. In the ninth grade, mean scores for OPT students

Table 4

Ninth Grade Mathematics

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Computations			Concepts		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
OPT	Fall	18	513	29	498-527	532	31	515-549	502	29	487-516
	Spring	18	500	46	477-523	535	49	511-559	466	48	442-490
Non-OPT (8th Grade)	Fall	80	477	47	467-488	480	44	470-489	484	56	472-497
	Spring	80	508	38	500-517	516	52	505-528	492	47	482-503
Vocational Education	Fall	4	612	43	544-680	626	29	580-673	599	54	512-685
	Spring	4	584	74	467-701	584	87	445-722	587	69	477-696
Regular Education	Fall	155	574	42	567-581	591	52	582-599	563	45	556-570
	Spring	155	569	67	559-580	588	76	576-600	557	66	546-567
Special Education	Fall	10	455	40	426-484	467	53	429-505	456	34	431-480
	Spring	10	460	51	423-496	493	53	455-531	434	62	389-478

Table 5

Tenth Grade Mathematics

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Computations			Concepts		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
OPT	Fall	32	489	70	464-515	488	62	465-510	503	75	476-530
	Spring	32	517	58	496-537	525	60	503-546	514	51	495-532
Vocational Education	Fall	8	614	33	586-642	596	49	555-636	630	34	602-658
	Spring	8	621	34	593-650	621	50	579-662	621	35	592-649
Regular Education	Fall	113	582	47	573-590	580	46	571-588	584	55	573-594
	Spring	113	602	46	593-610	607	45	598-615	593	58	582-603
Special Education	Fall	5	473	59	400-546	488	74	396-581	488	74	396-581
	Spring	5	530	47	472-587	514	32	473-554	549	73	458-640

Table 6

Eleventh Grade Mathematics

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Computations			Concepts		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
OPT	Fall	6	486	69	414-558	526	66	456-595	451	60	398-524
	Spring	6	533	40	490-575	561	45	513-608	496	38	456-536
Vocational Education	Fall	15	599	56	568-630	624	75	583-666	570	63	535-605
	Spring	15	592	35	572-611	608	47	582-634	572	48	545-599
Regular Education	Fall	116	598	50	589-607	620	53	611-630	574	60	563-585
	Spring	116	612	52	602-621	628	56	618-638	593	60	582-604
Special Education	Fall	6	517	86	427-608	562	84	474-651	480	77	399-561
	Spring	6	530	73	453-607	544	75	465-623	518	75	439-596

Table 7

Twelfth Grade Mathematics

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Computations			Concepts		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
Vocational Education	Fall	12	576	73	530-623	582	61	543-621	573	82	521-625
	Spring	12	564	83	511-617	587	81	536-639	536	109	467-606
Regular Education	Fall	87	611	59	599-624	624	58	611-636	599	66	585-613
	Spring	87	616	59	603-628	637	70	622-652	595	73	580-611

Table 8
Ninth Grade Reading
Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals
1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Vocabulary			Comprehension		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
OPT	Fall	17	463	42	442-485	472	50	447-498	470	36	452-488
	Spring	17	460	77	420-499	455	71	419-492	476	72	439-513
Non-OPT (8th Grade)	Fall	81	480	55	469-491	484	46	473-494	486	57	473-499
	Spring	81	461	62	447-474	465	61	452-479	473	58	460-486
Vocational Education	Fall	3	532	38	465-656	564	33	483-645	558	40	459-657
	Spring	3	543	37	450-636	568	34	485-652	527	44	417-636
Regular Education	Fall	157	546	63	536-556	542	65	532-552	552	67	541-563
	Spring	157	546	80	533-558	541	76	529-553	555	86	541-569
Special Education	Fall	11	430	50	396-464	432	41	404-459	451	54	414-487
	Spring	11	417	51	383-452	435	53	400-471	430	49	396-463

Table 9

Tenth Grade Reading

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Vocabulary			Comprehension		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
OPT	Fall	31	461	65	437-485	453	62	430-476	479	73	452-506
	Spring	31	487	56	466-507	490	55	470-510	497	57	476-518
Vocational Education	Fall	8	531	78	465-596	494	70	435-552	560	87	487-632
	Spring	8	621	68	563-678	620	80	554-687	616	64	563-669
Regular Education	Fall	116	552	84	537-568	529	102	510-547	566	76	552-580
	Spring	116	587	90	570-603	582	90	565-598	591	96	573-609
Special Education	Fall	5	439	43	386-492	437	33	396-478	462	44	408-517
	Spring	5	496	48	436-555	495	47	436-553	508	45	452-564

Table 10

Eleventh Grade Reading

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Vocabulary			Comprehension		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
OPT	Fall	5	473	66	392-555	455	77	359-551	498	43	445-552
	Spring	5	476	21	450-502	512	35	469-555	467	26	345-499
Vocational Education	Fall	15	587	83	541-633	581	91	530-632	591	76	549-634
	Spring	15	573	86	526-621	568	87	519-616	578	77	536-621
Regular Education	Fall	113	571	70	558-584	559	80	544-574	580	66	568-593
	Spring	113	584	64	572-595	573	68	561-586	589	67	577-602
Special Education	Fall	6	495	119	370-620	518	86	428-609	499	158	333-664
	Spring	6	493	113	375-612	510	93	412-607	501	110	386-616

Table 11

Twelfth Grade Reading

Scale Score Means, Standard Deviations, and 95% Confidence Intervals

1982-1983

Group	Test Date	N	Total			Vocabulary			Comprehension		
			Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI	Mean	SD	CI
Vocational Education	Fall	15	576	59	543-609	572	49	545-600	579	68	541-617
	Spring	15	551	78	507-594	557	65	521-593	553	79	510-597
Regular Education	Fall	88	602	75	586-618	593	85	575-611	608	73	592-623
	Spring	88	590	76	574-606	589	78	573-606	590	79	573-607

were higher than special education student means, similar to Non-OPT student means, and lower than either regular or vocational education student means. Patterns for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade student means were similar to patterns noted for the mathematics scores. Examination of the 95% confidence intervals indicated no statistically significant differences from fall to spring testings for any of the groups.

On Table 12, changes in means for the mathematics and reading scores from pretest to posttest are presented. The OPT students increased total test scores in reading and mathematics at the tenth and eleventh grades, but decreased in the ninth grade. Non-OPT students decreased in reading scores but increased in mathematics scores. Vocational education means increased in tenth grade and in ninth grade reading, but decreased in eleventh and twelfth grades and in ninth grade mathematics. Regular education means increased in tenth and eleventh grades and twelfth grade mathematics, but decreased in ninth grade mathematics and twelfth grade reading. Special education means increased in tenth grade and in ninth and eleventh grade mathematics, but decreased in ninth and eleventh grade reading.

To increase the interpretability of these scale scores, Table 13 presents the equivalent percentile ranking for each group by grade level for the spring total mean scores in mathematics and reading. These results should be interpreted with caution since they require a double transformation through the norming tables.

Two comparisons were conducted with results from the 1981-82 data analyses. The first comparison examined the changes over time in scale scores for approximate intact class groups. Thus, mean scores for the 1981 tenth grade students were compared with mean scores for the 1982 eleventh grade students.

Table 12

Scale Score Fall to Spring

Changes by Program and Grade

1982-1983

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Program	Test	Ninth		Tenth		Eleventh		Twelfth	
		Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading
OPT	Total	13	- 3	28	26	47	3		
	Subtest 1	3	-17	37	17	35	57		
	Subtest 2	-35	6	11	18	35	-31		
NON OPT (Eight Grade)	Total	31	-19						
	Subtest 1	26	-19						
	Subtest 2	8	-13						
VOC ED	Total	-28	11	7	90	- 7	-14	-12	-25
	Subtest 1	-42	4	25	126	-16	-13	5	-15
	Subtest 2	-12	-31	- 9	56	2	-13	-37	-26
REGULAR	Total	- 5	0	20	35	14	13	5	-12
	Subtest 1	- 3	- 1	27	53	8	14	13	- 4
	Subtest 2	- 6	3	9	25	19	9	- 4	-18
SPECIAL ED	Total	5	-13	57	57	13	- 2		
	Subtest 1	26	3	26	58	-18	- 8		
	Subtest 2	-12	-21	61	46	38	2		

Table 13

Percentile Equivalents for 1982-83 Spring Total Test Scale Scores

Program	Ninth		Tenth		Eleventh		Twelfth	
	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading
OPT	17	9	18	11	18	6		
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	52	36	60	60	41	31	28	20
REGULAR EDUCATION	46	38	51	44	49	35	48	33
SPECIAL EDUCATION	8	3	22	13	18	9		

Table 14 presents the results of these comparisons. OPT students consistently increased in mathematics scores but decreased in reading scores. A similar pattern was noted for regular and vocational education students in the tenth to twelfth grades. In the ninth to tenth grade changes, however, both regular and special education student mean scores increased.

In the second analysis, presented in Table 15, changes in spring mean scores for a given grade level in 1982 and 1983 were examined. For example, the 1982 mean ninth grade reading total score was compared with the 1983 mean ninth grade reading total score. Increases were noted in mean mathematics total scores for all groups at all grade levels. Generally, however, reading scores declined from 1981-82 to 1982-83.

Overall, it appeared that the OPT program has consistently increased academic performance of the students in many areas and across grade levels. These increases should be considered in light of the previous lack of academic performance for these students and the likely alternative loss of academic skills resulting from dropping out of school. Thus, one of the objectives of the program has been met.

Analysis of Changes in OPT Students Across Time

In addition to the initial comparisons of OPT students with other student groups in the school setting, a time series analysis was conducted for the academic performance of third year OPT students to determine learning and drop-out patterns across the three years of participation in the program. Means were calculated for all students taking the CAT over the three year time span. A separate calculation was conducted to determine academic performance of only those students completing the third year with both reading and mathematics scores for all three years. These two sets of data are presented

Table 14

Changes over Time in Scale Scores for Approximate Intact Class Groups

Spring 1982 to Spring 1983

Group	Math Scale Scores			Reading Scale Scores		
	8th	9th	Change	8th	9th	Change
OPT	476	500	24	510	460	-50
	9th	10th	Change	9th	10th	Change
OPT	472	517	45	508	487	-21
REGULAR EDUCATION	551	602	51	567	587	20
SPECIAL EDUCATION	458	530	62	485	496	11
	10th	11th	Change	10th	11th	Change
OPT	482	533	51	492	476	-16
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	532	592	60	584	573	-11
REGULAR EDUCATION	569	612	43	600	584	-16
SPECIAL EDUCATION	489	530	41	487	493	6
	11th	12th	Change	11th	12th	Change
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	530	564	34	591	551	-40
REGULAR EDUCATION	572	616	44	613	590	-23

Table 15
Scale Score Spring 1982 to Spring 1983
Changes by Program and Grade

Program	Ninth		Tenth		Eleventh		Twelfth	
	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading
OPT	28	-48	35	- 5				
NON-OPT	32	-49						
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION			89	37	62	-18	60	- 6
REGULAR EDUCATION	18	-21	33	-13	40	-29	90	11
SPECIAL EDUCATION	2	-68	41	9	90	- 6		

in Table 16 and provided in graphic form in Figures 1 and 2, for mathematics and reading scores, respectively. Both graphs appear to demonstrate that students in the OPT program increase their academic skills over the three year participation in the program. In addition, the similarities in the patterns for the intact group and the matched data set of students completing the third year indicate that the effect of losing students from the program does not severely affect the mean scores for the remaining group.

An analysis of the attendance rate, average daily attendance (ADA), retention-in-grade rate, and drop-out rate for the OPT students and an identified group of Non-OPT students was also conducted and is further described in the attached report. Results indicated that the program is effective in keeping OPT students in school longer than the comparable Non-OPT group.

Acceptance of the OPT Program by Students and Faculty

To determine the problems and benefits of the OPT program, a series of interviews were conducted with students, teachers, and a parent associated with the program. Interview schedules for each of these groups are appended to this report. Confidential interviews were conducted in a separate room in the school on April 21 and 26, 1983.

Eleven students were interviewed who had been systematically selected by the evaluator to represent a cross-section of demographic factors and length of stay in the program. Students unanimously indicated that they would recommend the program to a friend if the friend needed the program and that it was beneficial to them. Benefits of the program centered around

Table 16

Three Year Time Series of Total Scale Scores for
3rd Year OPT Students

Group	Test	Fall 1980	Spring 1981	Fall 1981	Spring 1982	Fall 1982	Spring 1983
Intact Group	Math	485	470	442	474	470	515
	Reading	449	468	482	502	467	473
Students Completing all 3 Years	Math	484	474	458	471	468	529
	Reading	476	459	489	507	470	473

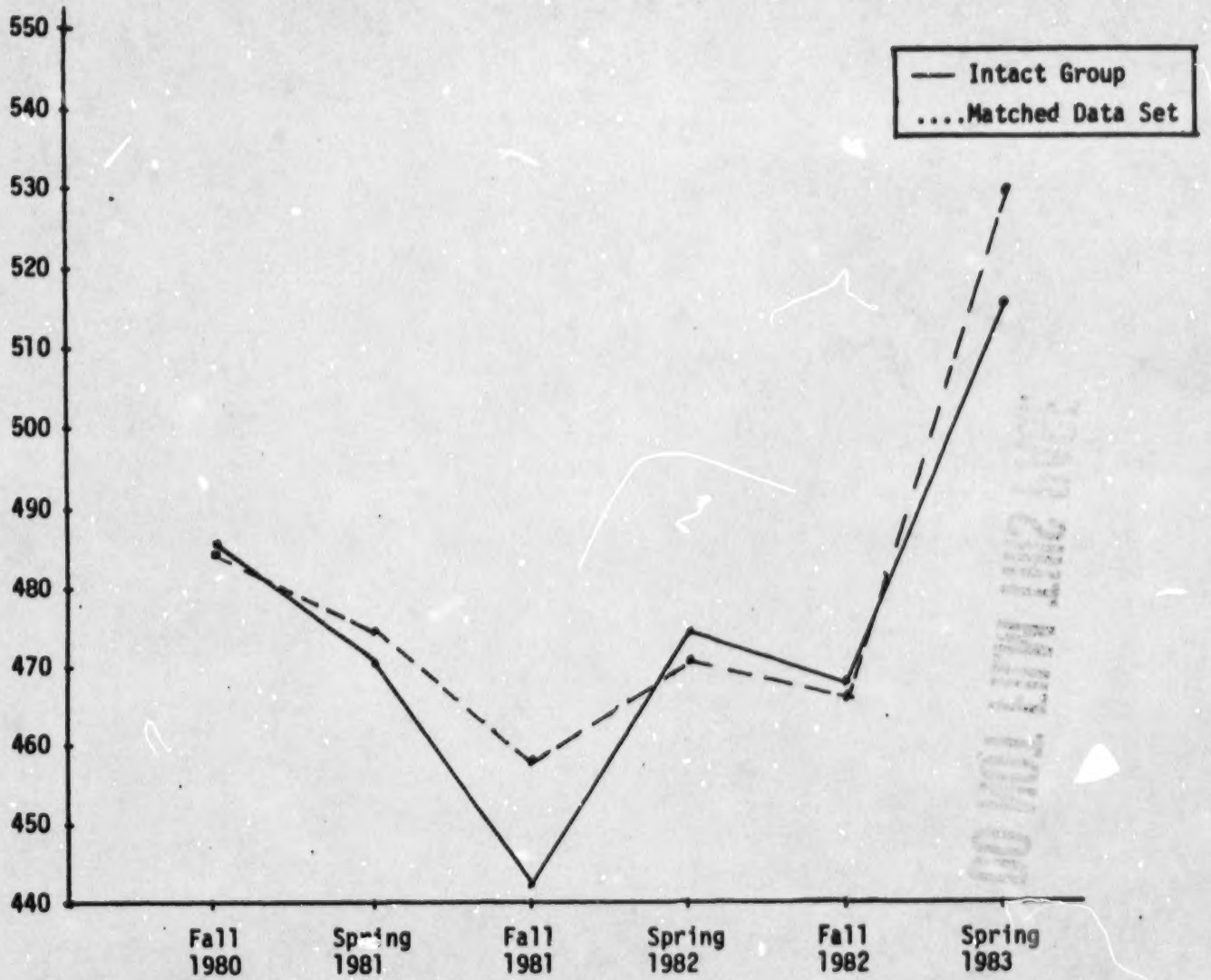

Figure 1. OPT Total Mathematics Scale Scores.

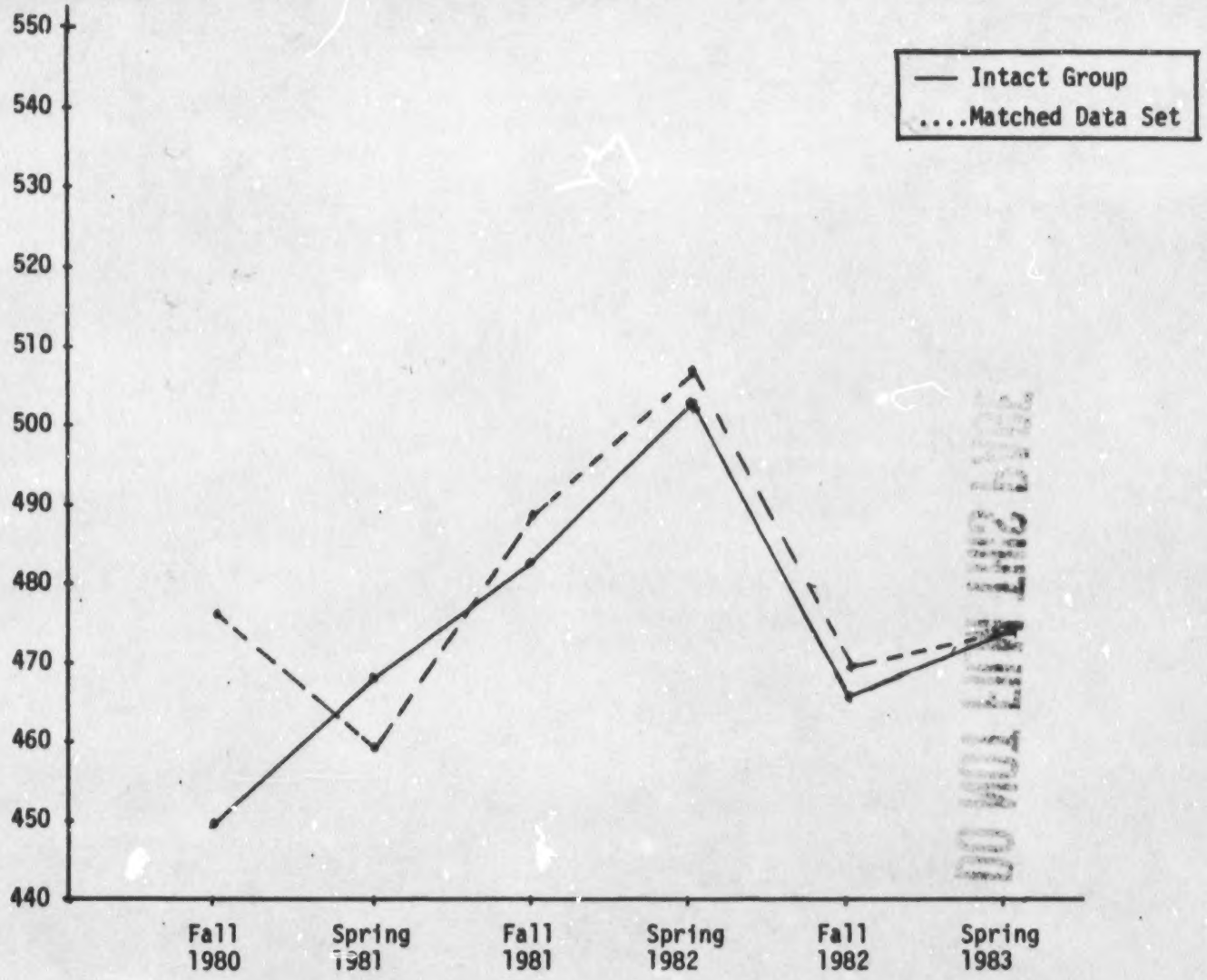

Figure 2. OPT Total Reading Scale Scores.

the opportunity to stay in school and learn more in basic mathematics and language arts as well as the job training they were receiving. Some students did not appear to recognize that the program was not going to result in a regular diploma. Others stated that they planned to take a fifth year of school to receive a regular diploma. None of the students interviewed had obtained a job through the OPT program. Aspirations of the students ranged from working in factories to enlisting in the army. Three students indicated they intend to attend college after high school. Very few problems were identified by the students. When asked, several indicated that the attitudes of other students toward them as OPT students was negative, but stated that it did not bother them. Overall, the students expressed support and enthusiasm for the OPT program.

Six of the nine teachers providing instruction to OPT students were interviewed. Three teach basic skills areas and three teach vocational skills. Most of the teachers were aware of the selection process for OPT students but were unclear on the exact details. Descriptions of the program centered around the individualized adjustment of the instruction to meet the needs of the OPT student, the practical application of academic skills in a vocational area, and the emphasis on providing successful educational experiences to the students. In the vocational areas, students are thoroughly integrated into the regular classes in some subjects but grouped together in others. Benefits cited for the program are the opportunity to experience academic success, staying in school longer, learning an employable skill, individualized instruction, and personal attention from teachers who care.

Problems noted included:

- lack of systematic communication among teachers about the OPT program and progress of students;
- difficulty in transferring students out of the program because of the attitudes of other teachers;
- the negative effects of labeling the student "dumb;"
- handling the discipline problems when the OPT students are integrated into the regular curriculum;
- lack of motivation on the part of the students who do not have the pressure of needing to "pass" the course; and
- the additional costs associated with the program in vocational areas in which repeated mistakes result in more materials expended with no increased allotment for the OPT student.

Most of the teachers described the overall worth of the program as excellent or good. Some indicated that it is still too early to tell whether or not the program is effective.

Due to the limited number of interviews conducted with parents, no results can be presented at this time.

Interpretations

The evaluation of the OPT program has been limited from the start by the very nature of the program. OPT students are specially selected because of their need for the program. They are, by definition, "different" from regular education students, vocational education students, and special education students. In the first year of the program, only a limited number of students were admitted to the program; thus, the non-admitted group can be considered an appropriate comparison group. The number of these students still remaining

in school after three years, however, limits severely any comparisons of academic performance. In the second and third years of the program, all qualified students were included in the program, thus eliminating an appropriate comparison group.

The strength of the program must rest not on statistically significant increases in achievement scores, but in maintaining these students in school where their academic progress can be continued and they can acquire useful skills for future employment. To this extent, the OPT program appears to have been successful in meeting the intended objectives of the program.

Prediction Analysis of Vocational Education Course Success

The last component of the evaluation consisted of a study using Fall, 1982 scores on the CAT to predict success in vocational education clusters as measured by assigned grades at the end of the year. There were 56 students enrolled in one of four vocational education clusters for whom pretest scores on the Reading and Mathematics sections were recorded. Subtests used in prediction analyses were:

- M1 - Mathematics Computation
- M2 - Mathematics Concepts
- MT - Mathematics Total (linear combination of Computation and and Concepts scores)
- R1 - Reading Vocabulary
- R2 - Reading Comprehension
- RT - Reading Total (linear combination of Vocabulary and Comprehension scores).

Success was defined as the numerical grade assigned to students by the teacher of the vocational education cluster. These grades ranged from 51 to 98.

Vocational Clusters and the number of students in each cluster were:

Food Service	7
Horticulture	5
Health Occupations	22
Auto Mechanics	14
Carpentry	4
Electrical	4
TOTAL:	56

An additional variable of the sex of the student was employed to improve the precision of the prediction equations.

Stepwise regression was employed to determine the strength of the relationship and the prediction equation to be used in identifying potential candidates for the vocational education clusters. Initial analyses were conducted on the entire data set, regardless of the specific cluster in which the students were enrolled. Additional analyses were conducted for the Health Occupations and Auto Mechanics clusters to predict for the individual cluster area. The number of students in the remaining clusters were too small to permit individual prediction equations to be developed.

Results for All Vocational Education Cluster Students

Three different analyses were conducted of scores for all vocational education cluster students to identify potential relationships and prediction equations. The dependent variable for each analysis was the numerical grade assigned by the teacher. In the first analysis, the independent variables were the Mathematics Total (MT) and Reading Total (RT) scores. Table 17 presents the Summary Table for this analysis. There was a weak linear relationship between the combined independent variables and the dependent

variable. Approximately 9% of the variation in assigned course grades can be explained by Mathematics and Reading Total scores on the CAT, and the multiple correlation was .29. The prediction equation for this analysis was $\hat{M} = 64.368 \quad .033(MT) + .004(RT)$. This formula could be used at the beginning of the school year to predict end-of-year course performance from the Mathematics and Reading Total scores by replacing the variable names with the student's scores and determining if the resulting predicted grade was high enough to encourage the student to take the course. For example, if a student scored 450 on the Mathematics Total and 400 on the Reading Total, the student's predicted end-of-year grade would be:

Grade = 64.368 + .033(450) + .004(400) = 64.368 + 14.85 + 1.6 = 80.818

In this equation, Mathematics Total scores are better predictors of success than Reading Total scores.

In the second analysis, an additional variable of Sex was inserted into the data analysis. Table 18 presents the Summary Table for this analysis consisting of three independent variables; Mathematics Total, Reading Total, and Sex. All three variables contributed significantly to the prediction equation. The combined variables had a multiple correlation of .405 and predicted 16% of the variance in the assigned course grades. The prediction equation was $\hat{M} = 59.386 + 6.034(Sex) + .030(MT) + .001(RT)$.

In the third analysis, the subtest scores were used as the independent variables instead of the total test scores. Thus, four independent variables were employed; Mathematics Computation (M1), Mathematics Concepts (M2), Reading Vocabulary (R1), and Reading Comprehension (R2). Table 19 presents the Summary Table for this analysis. Mathematics Concepts did not contribute sufficiently to the regression analysis for inclusion in the final data tables. The two

variables contributing significantly to the analysis were Mathematics Computations and Reading Comprehension. Tne three combined variables had a multiple correlation of .300 and predicted 9% of the variance in the end-of-year grades. The prediction equation was:

$\hat{M}$ = 66.557 + .026(Math Computations) + .019(Reading Comprehension) - .01?(Reading Vocabulary).

Very little of the variation in end-of-year grades for all vocational education cluster students can be predicted through examination of the Fall administration of the California Achievement Test. The very small sample size for this analysis limits the confidence that can be placed in these analyses.

Individual analyses of the scores for 22 students in the Health Occupations Cluster were conducted. These analyses paralleled the analyses previously described for the entire group of vocational education students. Tables 20-22 present the Summary Tables for these analyses. Table 23 lists the prediction equations for each analysis. Of the three analyses, the third analysis employing four independent variables (the four subtests) provided the best prediction of student course performance by explaining 21% of the variance in the grades.

Individual analyses of the 14 Auto Mechanics student scores were also conducted. Tables 24-25 present the Summary Tables for the regression analyses. Table 26 includes the prediction equations for these analyses. There were no female students in this cluster, thus eliminating Sex as an independent variable. The best prediction equations of all of the analyses conducted were identified for the Auto Mechanics Cluster. Use of the total test scores resulted in 30% explanation of the variance in grades, and use of subtest scores provided 47% explanation. Multiple correlations above .50 may be useful in advising students about their anticipated success in the cluster.

All of the previously presented analyses should be considered preliminary based upon the small sample sizes and the limitations in data collection. It appears that in some cluster areas, scores on the CAT may be useful in advising students of potential success in vocational education courses.

Table 17

Total Test Score Analysis

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SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	FMT		4.84827	.032	.28703	.08238	.08238	.28703	4.84827	.032
2	FRT		.19491	.666	.29164	.08506	.00267	.18193	2.46354	.305

Table 18

Total Test Score Plus Sex Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	SEX		5.34872	.015	.32435	.10523	.10523	.32435	5.34872	.015
2	FMT		3.74190	.018	.40323	.16421	.05721	.28703	5.32044	.229
3	FRT		.01344	.909	.40349	.16442	.00020	.18193	3.61083	.524

Table 19

Subtest Score Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	FM1		4.52346	.038	.27432	.07523	.07523	.27432	4.52346	.038
2	FR2		.55818	.471	.29393	.08642	.00119	.19537	2.63605	.331
3	FR1		.22035	.641	.30342	.09025	.00386	.19783	1.71958	.174

Table 20

Home Economics Total Test Score Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	FMT		.33547	.619	.11210	.01261	.01261	-.11233	.33547	.619
2	FRT		.37431	.647	.17629	.03179	.01914	-.04353	.41190	.736

Table 21

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Health Occupations Total Test Score Plus Sex Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	SEX		2.93375	.138	.35229	.12410	.12413	.35229	2.93373	.138
2	MT		.24265	.628	.36763	.13515	.01105	.11233	1.49551	.252
3	RT		.61799	.442	.40473	.16386	.02871	-.04353	1.17579	.349

Table 22

Health Occupations Subtest Score Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	M1		.73908	.430	.18879	.03564	.03564	-.18873	.73708	.430
2	M2		2.79400	.111	.39239	.15927	.12363	-.10539	1.77452	.132
3	R1		.35005	.561	.41863	.17531	.01604	.02593	1.27562	.313
4	R2		.84530	.371	.46300	.21437	.03905	-.37635	1.45967	.363

Table 23

Prediction Equations for Health Occupations Analyses

Total Test Score	75.332	+	.041(MT)	+	.023(RT)	= Predicted Grade	
Total Test Score Plus Sex	61.448	+	9.410(SEX)	+	.044(MT)	- .029(RT)	= Predicted Grade
Subtest Score	118.94	+	.071(M1)	-	.144(M2)	+ .081(R1)	- .061(R2) = Predicted Grade

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Table 24

Auto Mechanics Total Test Score Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	FM1		4.89439	.017	.53371	.28971	.28971	.53371	4.89439	.017
2	FD1		.20217	.652	.53552	.30252	.01282	.29233	2.38597	.136

Table 25

Auto Mechanics Subtest Score Analysis

SUMMARY TABLE

STEP	VARIABLE ENTERED	VARIABLE REMOVED	F TO ENTER OR REMOVE	SIGNIFICANCE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	R SQUARE CHANGE	SIMPLE R	OVERALL F	SIGNIFICANCE
1	FM2		9.47649	.010	.66427	.44125	.44125	.66427	9.47649	.010
2	FD1		.02916	.749	.66931	.44824	.00699	.25201	4.53211	.239
3	FD2		.53860	.480	.68487	.47454	.02930	.24454	3.91585	.361

Table 26

Auto Mechanics Prediction Equations

Total Test Score: 58.383 + .040(MT) + .004(RT) = Predicted Grade

Subtest Score: 53.885 + .050(M2) + .021(R1) - .018(R2) = Predicted Grade

APPENDIX

Occupational Proficiency Training Program
Teacher Questionnaire

May, 1983

Name:_____
Date:_____

Area(s) of Certification:_____
Subject/ Grade:_____
Years of Experience:_____

I. Introduction: Introduce yourself and make person at ease.

II. Purpose: State purpose of the interview in simple terms -- to find out more about the OPT program -- to help make improvements in the program.

III. Confidentiality: Ensure confidentiality of statements and notes recorded.

1. Tell me how students are selected for OPT?

2. Describe for me how the program operates?

3. How many OPT students do you have in your classes?

4. What kind of special counseling for OPT students?

5. How do you meet the special needs of these students?

6. How well do OPT students keep up in class?

7. What sort of interface is there with the communication and math remediation teachers?

8. How often are there meetings of teachers to discuss OPT?

9. Describe for me any special materials you need for the OPT students?

10. What kind of assistance do you receive from administration for the OPT program?

11. Describe the major benefits of the OPT program for the students?

for the teachers?

12. Describe the major problems of the OPT program for the students?

for the teachers?

13. Overall, how worthwhile is the program for these students?

____Excellent
____Good
____OK
____Poor
____Horrible

14. Other comments:

Occupational Proficiency Training Program
Student Questionnaire

May, 1983

Name:_____
Date:_____

Age:_____
Race:_____
Sex:_____
Grade:_____

I. Introducation: Introduce yourself and make person at ease

II. Purpose: State purpose of the interview in simple terms -- to find out more about the OPT program -- to help make improvements in the program.

III. Confidentiality: Ensure confidentiality of statements and notes recorded.

Questions	Comments
1. How long have you been in the OPT program?	
2. Tell me how the program operates.	
3. What do you plan to get out of the OPT Program? ____special vocational diploma ____job experience ____job training or training in skills ____job placement ____assistance in basic math & lang. arts ____vocational counseling	
4. Do you get to help decide which OPT courses you will take?	____Yes ____No
5. Who has helped you make these decisions?	____Teacher ____Guidance Counselor ____Parents
6. What type of high school diploma do you plan to get? ___regular ___vocational ___honors ___GED ___other ___none	

7. If you plan to receive a vocational diploma, how interested would you be in returning to high school for a fifth year of work in order to get a regular diploma?

___very interested
___slightly interested
___not interested at all

8. How many hours a day do you work?

___0
___1-2
___3-4
___5-6
___over 6

9. Did you get your job through the OPT Program?

___yes
___no
___I don't work

10. Do you plan to drop out of school?

___yes, after completing ____grade (In the black, put the last grade you expect to complete.)

___no

11. After leaving high school, what do you plan to do?
Check all that apply.

___go to college
___go to a trade or business school
___work full time - not attend school
___work full time while going to college/trade school/business school
___work a while and then go to college/trade school/business school
___other, please note: _____

_____

12. Fill in the profession or occupation that you think you will have five years after you graduate from high school.

_____

13. What is the best part about the OPT program?

14. What is the worst part about the OPT program?

15. Would you tell your friends to be in the OPT program?

Occupational Proficiency Training Program
Parent Questionnaire

May, 1983

Name:_____
Date:_____

Student Age:_____
Race:_____
Sex:_____
Grade:_____

I. Introduction: Introduce yourself and make person at ease

II. Purpose: State purpose of the interview in simple terms -- to find out more about the OPT program -- to help make improvements in the program.

III. Confidentiality: Ensure confidentiality of statements and notes recorded.

1. What was the last grade you completed? _____

2. Are you a single parent?

____yes ____no

3. What is your job? _____

4. What is your husband's (or wife's) job? _____

5. Is your child more interested in school this year than he/she was last year?

___more interested in school this year
___less interested in school this year
___no difference from last year

6. When you learned that your child was going to be in a special vocational training program this year, what were your feelings?

___I was pleased
___I was disappointed
___I don't think it makes any difference
___Other feelings. List them:_____

_____

7. How much time have you spent talking with your child about the OPT program?

___less than 15 minutes
___15 minutes to an hour
___Over an hour
___We haven't talked about it

8. What kind of diploma will your child receive if he/she stays in this program?

___regular
___vocational
___GED
___other
___none
___I don't know

9. What will your child have to do to get a regular diploma if he stays in the OPT Program?

___finish his senior year
___return to school for a fifth year of high school
___I don't know

10. What is the purpose of the OPT Program.

___to keep kids from dropping out of school
___to give help in basic math & communication skills
___to give kids training and experience in vocational skills
___to keep kids from upsetting the regular classes
___to separate some kids from the rest of the school
___other: List them:_____

_____

11. What is the best part about the OPT program?

12. What is the worst part about the OPT program?

13. Would you tell your friends to put their children in the OPT program?

OPT ATTENDANCE REPORT

ATTENDANCE REPORT

OPT PROGRAM

I. INTRODUCTION

II. OPT STUDENTS ATTENDANCE PERFORMANCES

a. Eleventh Grade OPT Students
b. Tenth Grade OPT Students
c. Ninth Grade OPT Students

III. NON-OPT STUDENTS ATTENDANCE PERFORMANCES

a. Eleventh Grade
b. Vocational Education Students
c. Average Daily Attendance of Total Student Body

IV. DATA COMPARISON

V. CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION.

The primary intention of the OPT Program is to develop for the students a situation whereby they are motivated to remain in school, i.e. reduce drop-outs. On this premise the OPT Program offered students who were prone to drop out of school, grade advancement to appropriate age-mate levels and a curriculum that is more suitable to needs and abilities. Contingent to the success of the program is the students' attending school and remaining in school for a longer period of time. Curricular needs are met through developing functional level academics and a fusion of a Vocational Track. The intention of this Vocational Track was to motivate students to remain in school while appropriately meeting the trade skills of those students.

Success of the OPT Program is evaluated with attendance data on students enrolled in the Program. Value for evaluation is attained through researching the attendance performances of the OPT students individually and as a group. Comparison of this data with simular students not in the OPT Program results in value for success.

II. OPT STUDENTS ATTENDANCE PERFORMANCES

a. Eleventh Grade OPT Students (1979-83)

The attendance data were gathered from official records. These data were collected for a four year period beginning August 1979 through April 1983. The data collection period began in 1979 so as to include attendance information on students one year prior to their being enrolled in the OPT Program. The rationale here was to ascertain the attendance pattern of students prior to the OPT treatment.

Displayed below is a summary of these students' attendance performances in the school years 1979-83.

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DAYS PRESENT	DAYS ABSENT	NOT ON ROLL	% ATTENDANCE	ADA	% DROP-OUT
79-80	23	3931	209	-	94.33%	21.83	-
80-81	21	3641	279	220	92.33%	20.21	5.34%
81-82	16	2685	215	520	90.22%	14.91	24.48%
82-83	9	963	157	140	85.97%	6.87	48.66%
TOTALS	69	11,220	860	880	362.85	63.82	78.48
AVERAGES	17.25	2805	215	220	90.71%	12.95	19.62%

b. Tenth Grade OPT Students (1980-81)

In an effort to show continuing success of the OPT Program, research on attendance was conducted for the 10th grade students. These are the students who enrolled in the second year of the OPT Program - 1980-81. Following is a summation of their attendance performances.

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DAYS PRESENT	DAYS ABSENT	NOT ON ROLL	% ATTENDANCE	ADA	% DROP-OUT
80-81	23	3892	248	-	93.95%	21.62	-
81-82	23	4000	140	-	95.76%	22.21	-
82-83	22	2948	132	-	95.70%	21.05	4.34%
TOTALS	68	10,840	520	-	285.41	64.88	4.34
AVERAGES	22.66	3613.33	173.33	-	95.13%	21.62	1.44%

c. Ninth Grade OPT Students (1981-83)

Attendance data for the current 9th grade OPT students and one year previous to their enrollement in the Program are listed below.

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DAYS PRESENT	DAYS ABSENT	NOT ON ROLL	% ATTENDANCE	ADA	% DROP-OUT
81-82	23	3931	209	-	94.33%	21.83	-
82-83	22	2837	283	100	90.90%	20.26	4.34%
TOTALS	45	6768	492	100	185.23	42.09	4.34
AVERAGES	22.5	3384	246	50	92.61%	21.05	1.44%

III. NON-OPT STUDENTS ATTENDANCE PERFORMANCES

a. Eleventh Grade (1979-83)

In order to evaluate the attendance performances of OPT students, information was gathered on students with the same set of academic and retention criteria as OPT students, but who did not enter the Program. Below is a summary of these students' attendance performances

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DAYS PRESENT	DAYS ABSENT	NOT ON ROLL	% ATTENDANCE	ADA	% DROP-OUT
79-80	23	3892	248	-	93.95%	21.62	-
80-81	17	2923	237	260	92.46%	16.22	23.69%
81-82	12	2010	110	220	94.74%	11.16	33.44%
82-83	7	800	60	125	93.12%	5.70	47.83%
TOTALS	59	9625	655	605	374.27	54.70	104.96
AVERAGES	14.75	2406.24	163.75	151.25	93.56%	13.67	26.24%

b. Vocational Education Students

The curriculum for OPT students consists primarily of math, communication, and vocational classes. The OPT students progressively move into a Vocational Track as they accelarate through the grades. In order to evaluate by comparison, research was conducted on the students who are enrolled in a vocational curriculum but are not part of the OPT Program. This research was conducted over a seven(7) month period of the current school year. The students researched are those in the Vocational Track in grades 9-12. Below is a summation of the attendance performances of these students.

GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DAYS PRESENT	DAYS ABSENT	NOT ON ROLL	% ATTENDANCE	ADA	% DROP-OUT
12	24	3100	180	80	95.09%	22.12	8.3%
11	17	2178	142	60	93.87%	15.52	5.8%
10	8	1005	75	40	93.05%	7.15	-
9	3	393	23	-	93.57%	2.80	-
TOTALS	52	6676	420	180	375.58	47.63	14.10
AVERAGES	13	1669	106	45	93.89%	11.90	3.52%

c. Average Daily Attendance of Total Student Body

Average daily attendance, percent of attendance, and drop-out rate was researched on the entire student population at Mitchell-Baker High School. This population included all students, OPT, special education, vocational education regular education, and part time students. The results are as follows:

MONTH	ADA	% ATTENDANCE
1	820.80	97.25%
2	800.20	95.91%
3	787.55	95.14%
4	778.75	94.69%
5	755	95%
6	756.05	92.89%
7	762.25	93.88%
AVERAGE	780.08	94.96%

IV. DATA COMPARISON

Value is established by comparing the outcome of the attendance performances of OPT students with those of simular students not enrolled in the OPT Program. In other words, the outcome of the experimental group (OPT Students), is computed against the outcome of the control group(Non-OPT Students). The attendance performances of the first OPT students who are now 11th graders, is compared with the performances of eligible 11th grade students who were not chosen for the OPT Program. Listed is a comparison and the degree to which the experimental group out performed the control group.

	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	DAYS PRESENT	DAYS ABSENT	NOT ON ROLL	% ATTENDANCE	ADA	% DROP-OUT
OPT	17.25	2805	215	220	90.71%	15.95	19.62%
NON-OPT	14.75	2406	164	151	93.56%	13.67	26.24%

V. CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

1. Over a four year period the number of students who remain enrolled is higher in the experimental group than in the control group.

2. The average daily attendance is higher in the experimental group than in the control group.

3. Students who were not given the treatment drop out at a higher rate than those enrolled in the OPT Progam.

4. Students who are enrolled in the OPT Program remain in school longer and drop out at a lower rate than students of simular circumstance.

5. The OPT Program does serve to benefit the students in that it provides for a longer period of education.

6. Research indicates that the OPT Program will result in students remaining in school longer.

7. One significant fact is that if students remain in school longer, their chances for learning and becoming more employable improve.